

YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR YOUR SAFETY!

Natural areas present hazards. Rocks roll, trees topple, and limbs drop without warning. Wild animals, uneven ground, and changing weather can pose dangers. People may create other hazards through campfires, traffic, snowplay, and poor decisions.

Water is the main cause of death here. Many drowning victims were walking or climbing near rivers and unexpectedly fell in.

The Park Service works to reduce risks, but your safety is in your hands. Keep alert. Read warnings and ask a ranger for advice.



DROWNING is the #1 cause of death in national parks. Once in a river, getting out can be nearly impossible. Rocks are smooth and slippery; swift, cold water rapidly saps your strength. Be extra careful along rivers and streams; falling in is as dangerous as swimming.

TICKS: Common in foothill grasses; check yourself after a walk. Their bite is painless, but a small percentage carry Lyme disease. Remove them carefully with tweezers; seek a ranger's and/or doctor's advice.



PLAGUE: Please do not feed or touch ANY park animals. Fleas on rodents can carry plague. Deer mice feces can carry hantavirus.

WEST NILE VIRUS is caused by bites from infected mosquitos. The chance of infection is low and human illness is unusual, but avoid mosquito bites.

HYPOTHERMIA: This life-threatening condition can occur year-round. Stay dry and snack often. If others don't respond to the need for warmer clothes or are stumbling, forgetful, or extremely tired and drowsy, get warm sugary drinks into them immediately. Get them into dry clothing, sleeping bags, and shelter.

LIGHTNING: As soon as you see dark clouds or lightning or hear thunder, get inside a large building or a vehicle (not convertible), if possible.

Do not stand under trees or in shallow caves. Avoid projecting above the surrounding landscape such as standing on a ridge, on Moro Rock, or in open meadows. Stay away from open water, wire fences, and metal railings, which can carry lightning from a distance.



RATTLESNAKES:

Watch where you put your hands and feet! Common in the foothills, rattlesnakes are protected in parks. Most bites result from teasing or handling them.

Very few people die, but tissue damage can be severe. If bitten, avoid panic; call a ranger or 911.

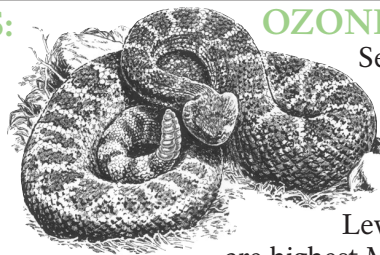
COUGARS roam the parks, but chances of seeing one are very small. It is rare, but mountain lions have attacked people and pets, so be aware. Avoid hiking alone. Watch children closely; never let them run ahead. If you see a cougar, the goal is to convince it that you are not prey and may be dangerous to it:

- Don't run. Cougars associate running with prey and give chase.
- Try to appear as large as possible. Don't crouch or try to hide.
- Hold your ground or back away slowly while facing the lion.
- Pick up children.
- If the lion acts aggressively, wave your hands, shout, and throw stones or sticks at it.
- If attacked, fight back!
- Report any cougar sightings.

CARBON MONOXIDE:

This odorless, colorless gas can be fatal. Never burn charcoal in enclosed spaces such as a tent, camper, or RV.

POISON OAK: This common shrub grows in the foothills up to 5000 feet elevation. Red in fall with whitish berries, bare in winter, in spring it has shiny green leaves in groups of three. If you touch any part of the plant, wash skin and clothes as soon as possible.



OZONE POLLUTION:

See air-quality index forecasts in visitor centers. Most ozone rises into the Sierra on warm afternoon winds. Levels of this colorless gas are highest May to October, peaking in late afternoon. These peaks sometimes reach "unhealthy" state and federal standards and can affect respiratory systems. Ozone forms in sunlight from gases in car and factory exhaust. This statewide problem challenges us all to reduce pollution.

OPERATION NO-GROW

- Prevent illegal marijuana growing.
- Protect visitor & employee safety.
- Preserve your natural resources.
- Promote *your* National Park experience!

Keep your parks safe and free from illegal activities! Report suspicious activities to 1-888-NPS-CRIME.

UNSAFE WATER: Giardia, a protozoan in lakes and streams, can cause intestinal distress. Iodine and other chemicals may not be as reliable as heat in killing bacteria or Giardia, but can be effective if used properly. Boil drinking water at least 3 minutes.

SAFE DRINKING WATER:

Each of the parks' 13 water systems is tested regularly to ensure that it meets state and federal standards. Annual Consumer Confidence Reports are available at visitor centers, or call 559-565-3341.

SAFE EXPLORATION: Avoid going alone. Tell someone your plans and return time. Beware of uneven or slippery surfaces. Wear sunglasses and sunscreen. Share roads and trails with people and wildlife.

Rules of the Road

TRAFFIC DELAYS - SEQUOIA

Slow for road work & trail reconstruction along the Generals Highway in the area near the Sherman Tree. The parking lot near the tree remains open.

ROAD CONDITIONS

24-hour recording: 559-565-3341 then press 9, then 4.

STILL-ICY ROADS

Spring storms & cold nights can mean slick roads. Slow down on ice; don't make sudden moves.

DON'T LOSE YOUR BRAKES

Always downshift when going downhill. In automatic vehicles, put the gearshift on 1, 2 or L. The engine gets louder as it slows you down, but it will save your brakes.

STAY ON PAVEMENT

Park & travel on pavement only.

FINDING GASOLINE

No gas stations within park boundaries. Only Grant Grove market sells cans of emergency gas. Fill up in Three Rivers, Clingan's Junction or in the National Forest at:

- Stony Creek Village 1-559-565-3909: starting 5/12 weather permitting, available 24 hours with credit card. Between Wuksachi & Grant Grove on the Generals Hwy.
- Hume Lake Christian Camp 559-335-2000: year-round 24 hours with credit card. 11 miles (18 km) north of Grant Grove via Hwy 180.
- Kings Canyon Lodge 1-559-335-2405: usually 9am-dark, call to confirm. 17 miles (27 km) north from Grant Grove on Hwy 180.

PREVENT CAR FIRES

Hot brakes & mufflers start fires in dry grass. Don't stop in grassy areas; used paved turnouts only.

MOTORCYCLES

Avoid oil buildup in uphill lanes.

LENGTH ADVISORY

On 12 narrow miles from Potwisha Campground to Giant Forest Museum in Sequoia, advised maximum is 22 feet (6.7m). Maximum length limit on the Generals Highway is 40 feet (12 m) for single vehicles, 50 feet (15 m) for vehicles plus a towed unit. Alternatives: Hwy 180 from Fresno is straighter, less steep, & wider. If you are towing a car, camp in the foothills & use the car to explore.

EMERGENCY CAR REPAIRS

For a tow: 565-3341 then press zero (24 hours). In Sequoia Park only, AAA available for out-of-gas, lock outs, jump starts, minor repairs: call 565-4070 (24 hours).

BICYCLES

Ride only on roads (not trails), single file with traffic, and wear light colors after dark. People under 18 must wear a helmet.

LET OTHERS PASS

Slower vehicles *must* use paved turnouts to let traffic pass.

SPRING ROAD OPENINGS

IN KINGS CANYON & NATIONAL

FOREST/ SEQUOIA MONUMENT –

- Panoramic Point Road: Opens late spring when conditions allow.

- Redwood Mountain Road: Unpaved, rough. Not plowed.

- Big Meadows, Quail Flat/Ten Mile, Converse Basin (FS): Not plowed; opens with snow melt.

IN SEQUOIA –

- Crystal Cave Road: Open 5/14, weather permitting. Maximum vehicle length 22' (6.7m).

- Middle Fork Road: Open by 5/20; slippery when wet.

- Mineral King Road: Opens 5/27, weather permitting. RVs & trailers not recommended (not permitted in campgrounds). Until 5/27, new gate closed at Lookout Point entrance station requires a free permit from Foothills Visitor Center (see page 1).

- Moro Rock/Crescent Meadow Road: Opens with snowmelt.

- South Fork Road: Partially unpaved. Slippery when wet.